

# What is CANS?

Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths



Children's Mental Health Bureau



# WHAT WILL WE DISCUSS TODAY?

- Why do we need an assessment for youth being served by the Montana Children's Mental Health Bureau (MT CMHB) in CSCT Programs ?
- What is CANS – Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths – Functional Assessment?
  - What is the Montana CANS ?
- Why is MT CMHB using CANS?
- What is youth- and family-centered practice?
- How can you as an educator participate with CANS?
- Where can you get more information?

# WHY DO WE NEED AN ASSESSMENT?

- It provides a comprehensive picture of what a youth's needs and strengths are so that it informs the planning process.
- It helps create a shared vision or common goal of what everyone wants for a youth and family.
- The information collected and shared provides direction to all members of the team.
- Planning for a youth requires substantial decision-making, and this should be guided by evidence of needs and strengths.
- A comprehensive assessment tells us what outcomes we should look for over time.

# THREE TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

1 Youth and family self-report

2 Provider report

3 Collaborative completion – CANS



# WHAT IS CANS?

- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths
  - It identifies ***needs and strengths*** so that both are included in a youth's planning.
- A functional assessment designed for youth ages 0-21 years old
  - *Functional assessment*: Captures current functioning to have an accurate picture of areas of needs and strengths; past behaviors are captured but are not actively addressed in current planning.
- The CANS can be tailored to best fit the system using it.

# WHAT IS THE MONTANA CANS (CANS-MT)?

- MT CMHB customized the CANS-MT to specifically meet the needs of the children, youth, and families we serve. It is for children and youth ages birth to 21 years old.
- It has 9 main sections, with a total of 115 items.
- Each item is rated on a simple 4-point scale: 0, 1, 2, and 3
- To make sure the CANS is used correctly, providers must be both **trained and certified** to use the CANS.

# WHAT DO THE '0' TO '3' RATINGS MEAN?

- 0** = represents **best possible** functioning or a significant strength
- 1** = functioning or strength is okay, but we should keep an eye on it
- 2** = a moderate degree of functioning impacted or limited strength, and action is needed
- 3** = a severe degree of functioning impacted or no strength, and immediate and/or intensive action is needed

# KEY FEATURES OF THE CANS

- CANS integrates a lot of information and communicates it simply.
- It is flexible and can be completed in any order.
  - It is not an interview format with questions and answers.
- Information can be collected from many sources.
- For most items, it describes how youth and families are doing currently – it looks at the last 30 days.
- Each item rating translates immediately into an action.
  - There is no complicated scoring needed or overall summary score.
  - Everyone on the team can understand whether something should be done for each item based on how it is rated.



# KEY FEATURES OF THE CANS

- It focuses on **what** is happening and **not why**.
  - This is important so that everyone keeps a focus on *what* is happening because we can't always know *why* it is happening.
  - Focusing on the *why* can create feelings of embarrassment or blame for youth and families, which is not helpful to anyone.
- It always takes into account a youth's development and his or her culture to provide the most accurate information for planning.
- Youth and families should see a draft copy of the CANS and inform the ratings before it is finalized.

# USING CANS IN A TEAM CAN . . .

- Engage everyone as a full partner.
- Include everyone's voices and hopes for the youth.
- Reduce gossip or past stories that are not currently relevant.
- Help clarify where people are coming from.
- Create a meeting agenda focused on the specific needs and strengths of a youth and family.
- Streamline the process of planning and check-ins.
- Increase accountability.

# WHY IS MT CMHB USING CANS?



- CANS is a **youth and family friendly** tool that makes youth and family the center of the work.
- It is a **comprehensive** tool that captures a youth's current needs and strengths with simple, straightforward language.
- It gives youth, families and other team members an opportunity to collaborate as **full partners** in the work.

# WHY IS MT CMHB USING CANS?

- It helps providers put **all of the information** in one place and allows them to share it easily with youth, family, and other providers to best help the youth and family.
- It **guides** the provider in making decisions about what to focus on, how to prioritize treatment needs, and the strengths a youth has as well as which ones to help develop.
- It provides a comprehensive view of current functioning and is designed for multiple team member input to ensure the most relevant understanding of a youth.

# WHY IS MT CMHB USING CANS?

- It is purposefully **direct and clear**. It has simple ratings per item so that all important people in the youth's life can understand and communicate about his or her needs and strengths.
- It **helps** youth and families understand the recommendations that providers make for treatment.



# WHY IS MT CMHB USING CANS?

- It can be used to **track youth and family progress** over time. It helps monitor changes over time and whether the treatment is working.
- The **aggregate** information about youth and families will provide a more comprehensive picture of those served by Montana's behavioral health service system.
- The **aggregate data** can be used **to inform and improve** Montana's behavioral health services system at all levels.

# WHAT IS FAMILY-CENTERED PRACTICE?



- Youth and families engaged as full partners in care
- Parents and youth have greater sense of control in treatment planning
- Acknowledges and appreciates individual and family differences
- Shared goal development and planning
  - **Parents and youth as experts – immersed in family culture**
- Helps youth and families build skills and knowledge to anticipate and prepare for future challenges

# WHAT DOES RESEARCH TELL US?

- Involving family and youth in the goal-setting positively influences a family's satisfaction with care and enhances outcomes.
- Clear goals enhance motivation and lead to more positive outcomes (Locke & Latham, 1990).
- Specific, functional goals lead to the best outcomes (Ponte-Allan & Giles, 1999).
- Feedback about performance is necessary – celebrate success!
- Personal satisfaction comes with successful performance (Theodorakis, et al., 1996).





# THE CANS ASSESSMENT

## *Common Questions*

# CAN A FAMILY OR YOUTH REFUSE THE CANS ASSESSMENT?

***No, because the CANS is included as a standard part of care.***

- A comprehensive assessment is a requirement for service, and Montana CMHB has included the CANS as part of intake and monitoring activities.
- Youth and families should be included in the completion of the CANS and have the right to see all CANS items completed on them.

# WHEN IS A CANS REQUIRED?

- Each service has a detailed policy on the timeframes for completing a CANS on a youth.
- For CSCT, the policy and recommended practice is to complete an initial CANS upon admission, with updates done every 90 days to keep things current and identify what is working.
- A CANS should also be done upon discharge from a service or transfer to or from another level of care.

# WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PARTICIPATE IN CANS?

- Ask the CSCT team about students' CANS and ask for an opportunity to provide input as a member of the youth's team.
- Review the items included in the CANS and share details about any past or current concerns that you have.
- Be sure to share the *specific evidence* you have about the youth's strengths and needs with the CSCT team.
- In meetings about the youth, ask about the current CANS summary report or progress reports.

# SUMMARY OF CANS

- CANS is required as a part of standard care in CSCT (Comprehensive School and Community Treatment) and will guide planning and monitor progress.
- CANS is comprehensive and integrates a lot of information from a youth's team in one place.
- Educators are a critical member of a youth's CSCT team.
- CANS focuses on both needs and strengths.

# SUMMARY OF CANS

- CANS creates a common starting point for case discussions.
- CANS helps provide direction for planning and anticipated outcomes.
- There should be a connection between the ratings on the CANS and the current plan for the youth. CANS creates transparency and accountability for all involved.
- CANS helps support team decisions and monitors progress.

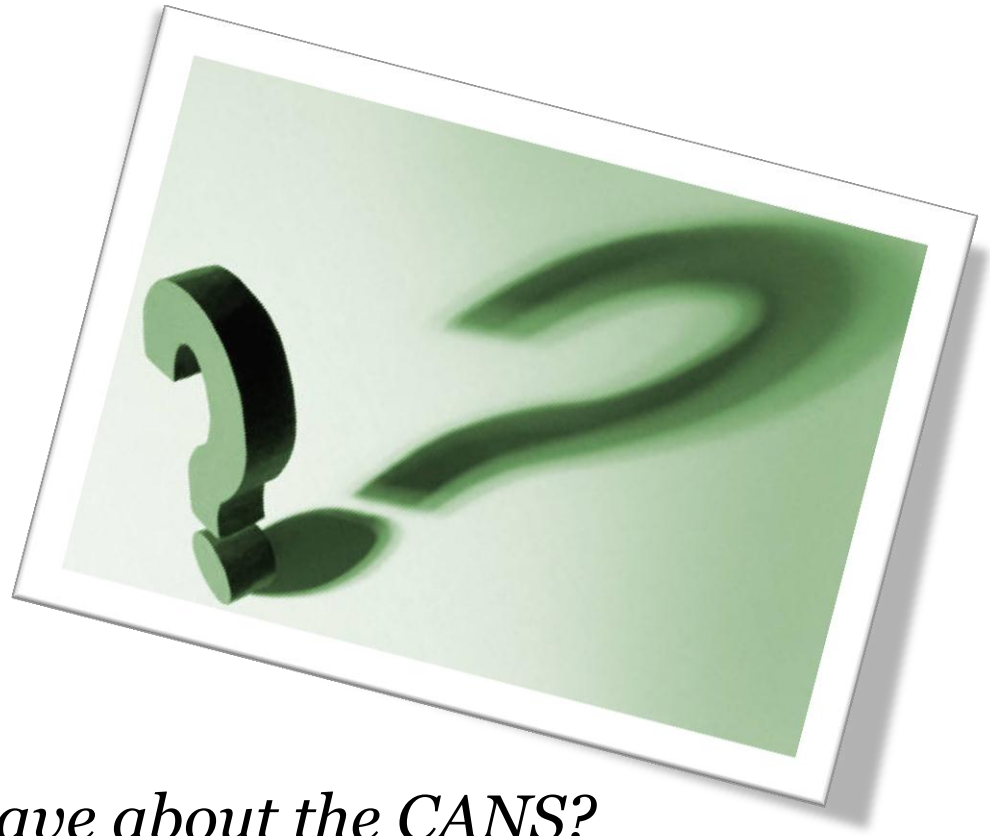
# SUMMARY OF CANS

- The rating numbers allow the important people in a youth's life to easily communicate what the youth's needs and strengths are, and if action is needed.
- The focus is on the youth's needs, not on temporary services that may cover up the true needs.
- CANS considers a youth's and family's culture and perspective.

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# DISCUSSION

*What questions do you have about the CANS?*

# WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFO?

*Ask the CSCT Certified CANS Trainer*

*Visit:*

*<http://dphhs.mt.gov/dsd/CMB>*

*Contact:*

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